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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION ON THE SPECIAL SUMMIT OF THE AMERICAS, JANUARY 15, 2004

1. Editorial in Tegucigalpa-based moderate daily "El Heraldito" on 1/15 entitled "A great deal of rhetoric and few results". "The Latin American presidents arrived in Monterrey with few expectations, and they came back with their hands practically empty. More than ever, this Summit was characterized by meaningless speeches and vain promises. It went by without the creation of concrete measures to concretize the good intentions of the governments to focus on the most vulnerable social sectors and increase the efforts to reduce poverty and social inequality'."

"It also clear that the conflicts between Latin America and the Northern colossus in several issues, such as the FTAA, and the relationship of certain nations with the Cuban government still remain."

"One of the positive developments of this Summit was the agreement to reduce the costs of sending remittances from the immigrants to their countries of origin, which benefits millions of families and the financial systems of these countries."

2. Editorial in San Pedro Sula-based liberal daily "La Prensa" on 1/15 entitles "Just another declaration". "The Summit of the Americas ended with yet another declaration of the good intention of our governments. The conclusions of the final declaration were mainly focused on political issues, neglecting once again the severe problem of poverty and unemployment in the hemisphere. The Declaration of Nuevo Leon is only one more document that didn't answer the key question of this region: how can Latin America finally achieve a stable development?."

"One of the novelties of this Summit, although it's still just a theoretical proposal, is the commitment of all governments to reduce in half the costs of sending remittances. This is a concrete goal. However, there's still a need to propose effective measures to compete with the big transnational companies that receive enormous profits from the remittances sent to Latin America."

3. Editorial in San Pedro Sula-based liberal daily "Tiempo" on 1/15 entitled "Uneventful". "The Summit of the Americas ended without any particular development, fulfilling one of the expectations the people of the hemisphere had on this event."

"The Declaration of Nuevo Leon is full of expressions of support and willingness to fight against poverty, corruption, terrorism, narcotrafficking, and the illegal traffic of arms, but few of them can actually be fulfilled by the Latin American governments."

Palmer